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Go Fix It!

Abolish daylight savings and adjust the time of the day to align with when people are most active in order to conserve energy used on lighting.

It is a known fact that any person should get 8 hours of sleep. While I'm sure many of my peers can object to this actually happening, if we assume that the average American sleeps 8 hours a day, they are awake doing some type of work for 16 hours of the day. These 16 hours are either lit through natural or artificial lighting, which largely depends upon when the sun rises and sets. The EIA estimates that in 2012, the average residential and commercial buildings used about 461 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity for lighting – about 17% of the energy used per household. If daylight savings is abolished and the times of the day are adjusted, the light of the day can be altered to correspond with the average day of the human rather than acting against our schedules. If we are assuming that the average day of Americans is from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm with a 9 – 5 job, you can see that the amount of sunlight is expended towards the beginning of the day starting from wake up. This wastes about 3 hours of sunlight on leisure activating and transportation when small amounts of light are actually needed. During the winter months, the sun then sets right around when everyone is getting off of work. There are still many more tasks which need to be completed once the work day is over, one of which includes cooking dinner. Through the first chart, we can assess that natural daylighting is wasted by being exposed at such early hours. This is proven as an inconvenience because of the need of the shades which attempt to completely block out the sun. I propose that daylight savings is abolished. This will make life easier in not having to maintain a tradition which is now completely outdated. In chart two, we can see what would happen if we abolished daylight savings and shifted the times back an hour. Now, in the summer months, none of the light is being wasted in hours which people are generally sleeping. Additionally, during the winter, the daylight is being spread throughout the most active parts of the day where the most extreme sunrise and sunset are at 9 am and 7 pm. These daylight hours are much more useful than the current sunrise/ sunset of Troy, NY: 7:03 am and 4:23 pm. This overall shift in hours will help to make more use of natural daylighting and therefore reduce the amount of artificial lighting needed. In the Electricity Use graph, we can see that lighting is 59% of the electricity use in retail and service buildings. Additionally, the choice in light bulb can play a large part in this number. Incandescent bulbs last about 1 year while LED bulbs last about 20. By shifting the hours to an appropriate day time and by using more sustainable light bulbs, the amount of energy used on artificial lighting can greatly decrease.

"Troy, New York - Sunrise, Sunset, Dawn and Dusk times for the Whole Year - Gaisma." *Troy, New York - Sunrise, Sunset, Dawn and Dusk times for the Whole Year - Gaisma*. N.p., n.d. Web. 28 Nov. 2014.
<http://www.gaisma.com/en/location/troy-ny.html>

"U.S. Energy Information Administration - EIA - Independent Statistics and Analysis." *How Much Electricity Is Used for Lighting in the United States?* N.p., n.d. Web. 28 Nov. 2014.
<http://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.cfm?id=99&t=3>